

## Athenian News :

O R,

## Dunton's Oracle.

From Tuesday March the 14th, to Saturday March the 18th, 1710.

*The Lying-Post, or Fictions prov'd Realities by Way of Paradox. The Paradoxes in this Post are to prove, 1. They feel no real Pain that have the Stone, Gout, Cholick, or any other torturing Disease. 2. That the British Apollo's pretended Satyr on Dunton's Oracle was a real Panegyrick upon it, and that the said Panegyrick contains Two Hundred Falshoods; with Reasons shewing the Necessity and Justice of re-answering all the Questions that Interloper has yet publish'd.*

**P**aradoxes are Things that seem strange, absurd, and contrary to the common Opinion, (or Lies, as the vulgar call 'em) and therefore this Post is call'd—*The Lying-Post, or Fictions prov'd Realities by Way of Paradox.*

This *Lying-Post* will be a Continuation of the Paradoxical Project I formerly publish'd, entitl'd *Athenian Sport*, for 'twill chiefly consist of pleasant Theſes, and yet so strange and uncommon, that all I advance will generally pass for Lies, but are in Reality Truths publish'd on Purpose to rowze and awake the Reason of Men asleep into a thinking and philosophical Temper, that (if possible) when Men will wink and sleep, and scorn to spend a serious Thought upon common Subjects, they may startle at Paradoxes, and wind up their Reason a little higher at the Sight of Wonders.

I call this *Lying, or Paradoxical-Post*, a Paper publish'd for common Good, as I hope to make that clear in a Paradox which many Volumes have left under a Veil, for the main Design of a Paradox is, to amuse and divert the Age, or rather, to bring that to Light under a seeming Contradiction, which cou'd scarce be discover'd any other Way: So that a Paradox is a pleasant and bold *Anigma*, and aims at nothing but Reformation, or innocent Mirth; and here, Reader, (as I formerly hinted in my *Paradoxical-Project*, entitl'd *Athenian Sport*) 'tis proper to let you know, that since I have search'd into the false Notions of some modern Authors, (but more especially of the *British Apollo*) I find so much Reason to run coun-

ter to all the World, that I cou'd almost resolve for the future neither to speak nor write except in *Paradox*.

I shall only add, (by Way of Preface) this is the first Project that ever came abroad under the Title of the *Lying-Post*, (for few, like the *British Apollo*, cry *stinking Fish* that sell it) and being such, doth beg for such Allowance as ought to be given to those who are the first Founders of any Project, for you know, *facile est inventis addere*.—However, Reader, what is wanting in Strangeness and Contradiction in this first *Lying-Post* shall be abundantly made up in the second; but the first Paradox will amuse and divert the Reader so far as to prove,

*They feel no real Pain that have the Stone, Gout, Cholick, or any other torturing Disease.*

I shall always not only thankfully acknowledge, but insert the Names, when allow'd, of my Benefactors to my *Three Thousand Posts*, and for that Reason shall here acquaint the Reader that the first Paradox in this *Lying-Post*, proving, *They feel no real Pain that have the Stone, Gout, Cholick, or any other torturing Disease*, was sent to me with these Lines, viz.—*Mr. Dunton, understanding one of your Three Thousand Posts will be entitl'd, The Lying-Post, or Fictions prov'd Realities by Way of Paradox, I have here sent you a Paradox, (or Lye, as the vulgar call it) that deserves a Place in your Lying-Post, as being a Paradox that may be of general Use.*—The Paradox is this, viz.

*They feel no real Pain that have the Stone, Gout, Cholick, or any other torturing Disease.*

**T**hose Philosophers who so much contend for the Gratification of Sense, who make Pleasure the End of their Labours, and put no Difference between the Felicity of Man and the Content of a Beast, have so much Love for their Bodies, and exercise so much particular Care for its Preservation, that they are not asham'd to establish its Happiness in its Health, and to attribute thereunto all those glorious Qualifications which *Aristotle* bestows upon the Knowledge of the chief Good, and which the wise *Roman* assigns unto Virtue. That Pain which incommodeth the Body seemeth to them the most cruel of all Evils; and they have so much given Way to Ease, as to affirm, *that no Life is more miserable than that which is mix'd with Pains and Diseases*; for if our other Evils, say they, beget our Disquiet, if Ignominy offend us, if Poverty



Poverty afflict us, and if the Death of our Friends draw Tears from our Eyes, they do not so much hurt our Body as our Imagination; and we need but a common Dexterity to persuade our selves, that these being Things out of our Power, they cannot give us any Incommodi-ty. But Pain is a Thing within us, its Presence brings down our Body, it seizeth our Members, and ascending from the meanest to our more noble Part, it causeth us to feel all the Torments wherewith she exerciseth our Companion.

But what Arguments soever they frame, to justify the Fear of Torments, it must be said, that *she is the Daughter of Opinion*, that the Tortures which appear most terrible, are not always the most cruel, and that corporal Punishments do not seem less supportable than Banishment and Poverty, but because they are accompany'd with less Solemnity. Nothing doth so much awe us, as that which may happen to us by the Displeasure of a potent King; and who having the Disposition of our Life in his Hands, is able to condemn us to Tortures as terrible as infamous. Altho' that Diseases destroy the Body as well as Torments, that the Pestilence be not less fear'd by us than Punishments, and that there be natural Evils that exceed the Cruelty of the most ingenious Tyrants; yet is there not any thing which so much amazeth us as the Sight of Torments, and nothing so much shakes our Stability, as *the Preparations made to deprive us of Life, or to make Proof of our Faith*. Other Evils which arise from our Constitution, seize us silently, and their Coming is so sudden, that there is often no Distance of Time between their first Arrival and their Violence. Sickness overtakes us without Warning, it runs into our Veins without Noise, and without Shew of that which might trouble us, it congeals our Blood, or burns up our Entrails. Poverty hath not so frightful an Aspect, she neither hurts our Eyes nor our Ears, when she enters upon the Ruines of Riches, and Fortune changeth not her Countenance, in making us poor, or in placing us in the midst of Abundance. But Tortures are terrible, we are astonish'd at their Preparations, the Instruments of Death which they set out before us, beat down our Courage, and that tumultuous Noise which attends the Ceremony, throws Horror into the Minds of all that behold it. There they set in Order all the Cruelties which the Malice of Tyrants hath invented, here they set up the Cross, raise the Rack, expose the boiling Cauldrons to View, lay open the pitched Shirts, and rowze the Cruelty of savage Beasts, to devour us: All this attracting Matter sends Terror into our Soul, and it ought not to be thought strange, if we are so much afraid of Torments, since they are shew'd us with so much Addition, and that they appear to our Eyes in such frightful Shapes, that the Executioner even redoubles our Fear by gradually exposing the Instruments of Torture, and causeth the most resolute to abate his Constancy, by the Preparation of Things that are able to offend it. Nothing so much abates our Spirit as the Consideration of the Evil that threatens us, and Experience lets us see, that Pain is always less rigorous than the Apprehension we had of it. It is not always the Thing that wounds us, but the Opinion that we have conceiv'd of it; and we have found some Persons that had endur'd Tortures with Constancy, had they not first been overcome by the Ceremonies thereof. A Man is not miserable, neither does he feel any real Pain, that has the Stone, Gout, Cholick, or any other torturing Disease, unless he think himself to be in Pain; his Thoughts are

the Regulators of his Tortures, and to become a glorious Conqueror, he need but persuade himself, that the Evil he suffereth is light, or nothing.

Altho' these Arguments be peculiar, they cease not to be true, and it's sufficient to observe the Effects of Opinion, to make Judgment of what she can say for her self. For, as she is *the Child of the Body, rather than the Soul*, and borrows her Activity from the Sense, she takes her Part in all the Accidents that befall it, she shares in his Joy and Grief, and, by a subtle Craft, she raiseth the Price of whatever pleaseth it, and augments the Horror of whatever is odious to it. From thence it comes that she represents Torments with so much Frightfulness, and enhancing upon the Evils which the Body suffers, she gives them dreadful Shapes, which astonish us, and which equally send their Horror into the Soul of the Patient, and of the Spectators. She is so suspicious, that she never represents Evil nakedly, and she is so little faithful in her Reports, that she is generally found a Liar. If we float upon the Sea, and the Winds swell her Waves, or never so little toss our Vessel, we become faint-hearted; Reason and Light make their Escape; and, as if we had already suffer'd Shipwrack, or were condemn'd to drink up the whole Sea, we grow pale with Fear, and fall into a Sweat with Fright. If Earth tremble under our Feet, and if the Houses that cover us do but shake, or made Shew of falling upon us, what Outcries do we not make, and what Death's Faces do we not shew in our Countenances? Cold takes Possession of all our Limbs, Fear summons the Blood to the Heart, all Objects astonish us, and, as if the whole House were to fall on our Heads, we are afraid of every Part: Yet we are not ignorant, that a small Quantity of Water will choak us, that a Tile from our House is sufficient to knock out our Brains, and that we need but a Hole of three Foot to do our Business.

It is the same in Matters of Torture, of which we have so much Apprehension, the Noise that attends it makes the greatest Part of the Pain, Opinion enhanceth its Violence, and the Sight of so many Instruments set out for Shew, fills us with more Grief than that Death we are to suffer; yet we know that all those armed Soldiers, that that Troop of Officers, that the Executioner trimm'd up in a Waistcoat, can but remove us out of the World, let out our Soul at the Wound to be given us, and not to affright our selves with the Name of Murder, separate our Soul from our Body. In fine, they can do but what a Worm doth among Children in a Chamber, what the Gangreen causeth in the Hospitals, and what the Fever every Day produceth in the Courts of Princes and Shepherds Huts. An ordinary Resolution will serve to endure Evils that pass in a Moment, and which often terminate with the same Stroke by which they began.

It is indeed a difficult Thing to gain this Power upon our selves; we find at this Day but few *Scævola's* and *Regulus's*, it appertaineth but to those great Souls of Antiquity, to brave Tortures, and bear them without Disturbance. We find no more Men who dare burn their own Hands to abate the Confidence of their Persecutors, who dare run to meet Death in Derision of their tyrannical Oppressors, and whose Joys, in professing their Innocence, are not interrupted under the Hand of the Executioner. Modern Philosophy hath made us too tender, and the Love of our Bodies is become too natural to us, not to be afraid of so many Evils as do conspire our Destruction, not to fear a Wedge of Iron which breaks



breaks our Bones, wild Beasts which rip up our Bowels, Engines by which Death is convey'd to us with tedious Repetitions, and moderate Flames which reduce us not to Ashes, 'till after our Patience is tir'd out.

But as general Principles terminate in Examples, and that the living draw from them their principal Lights, I think I may here propose the Courage of a Heathen Dame to the Cowardice of our Christian Men, and shew them in the History of her Life, that Pain is insupportable only to them that are defective in Resolution.

Never was Empire more maligned than that of the first *Cæsar*; his Usurpation begat him the Hatred of all the Nations of the Earth, the *Romans* often attempted their Liberty; and did sufficiently testify by their Enterprises, that they could no longer endure the Government of a Man who had rob'd them of their Freedom. *Brutus* engag'd covertly in the Conspiracy, and tho' he forc'd himself in hiding the Matter from his Wife, he could not so well dissemble it, but she perceiv'd, and observ'd by the Change of his Countenance the Disturbance of his Soul, spake as follows: *Why do you dissemble your Troubles of Mind, and wherefore do you hide from me that glorious Resolution you have taken to put a Tyrant to Death? If you cannot hope for Help from me, and if my Sex forbid me to assist you in your Undertakings, you may, at least, expect from me some Comfort, or Lessening of your Griefs, or Misfortunes; and may be assur'd, that if I am not sufficiently strong to be your Second, I shall have always Courage enough to bear you Company wherever ill Luck or Fate shall call you; consider not the Weakness of those of my Condition, but remember only that I am the Daughter of Cato, and the Wife of Brutus, and that if this Body which I received from my Father have not Vigour enough to suffer Death, the Love that I have vow'd to thee, Brutus, shall make me constant in despising it.* Then shewing him a Wound she had given her self with a Razor, meerly because he mistrusted her Weakness in concealing a Secret, *See there, said she, Brutus, see there the Trial which I have made thereof, do thou not scruple to open thy Bosom to me, to reveal to me thy Designs: Know that within this Body is contain'd Cato's Heart, and that if my Sex permit me not to follow thee in that Execution thou hast determin'd, know that my Courage is great enough to die for thee and with thee.*

If a Punctilio of Honour, if a vehement Desire of Fame, and if a short Obstinacy animated by Vanity, have caus'd some to triumph over Death, conquer Pain, and despise the Rigour of Tortures, what cannot Virtue do when she is supported by Integrity? when she stands up for the Preservation of Laws? when she suffers for the Defence of her Temples and her Altars? since she is compos'd in her Actions, and preserves the same Measures in Delights as in Torments?

Wherefore to acquire this Insensibility of Pain so familiar to the *Stoicks*, and so little known to other Philosophers, let us often have in Mind the Actions of those generous Men, who by their Courage surmounted Tortures, let us fortify our selves against the Apprehensions of Death, let us not love our Bodies more than Necessity requireth; let us separate from Torments that Solemnity which affrighteth us, and let us persuade our selves, that those Ceremonies contain no more than what is despis'd by a Man in his Bed, sick of the Stone, Gout, or Cholick, than what is endur'd by one at a Feast who is sick at his Stomach, and what is undergone by a tender Woman in Child-bearing. So that 'tis evident they feel no other real Pain that have the Stone, Gout, Cholick, or

any other torturing Disease, but what is imaginary or fancy'd.

Thus, having oblig'd the World with a very ingenious Paradox, or sort of Lye, as a Paradox is a thing that seems absurd and contrary to the common Opinion, sent to me by an unknown Hand, I shall next present the Reader with a Paradox of my own writing, which, as much a Lye as it seems, I can fully prove, and resolve to vindicate as long as there is Pen and Ink to be had and I have Money to buy 'em; and this Paradox is to prove that the *British Apollo's* pretended Satyr on *Dunton's Oracle* was a real Panegyrick upon it, and that the said Panegyrick contains Two Hundred Falshoods, as appears by the following Letter.

### To the Interloper, or British Apollo.

S I R,

HAD I not been sensible of many and great Imperfections both in my Person and Writings, I shou'd have grown a little proud and vain upon reading that spiteful Character you gave of both in your *British Apollo*: But, Sir, the Honour you do me by thus magnifying my Character, by endeavouring to lessen it, proceeding from Self-Interest, and from no Design of advancing my Reputation, it does something lessen the Obligation: But that I may condescend a little to your DULL CAPACITY, my Meaning is, your BRIGHT PARTS, (as you call'd 'em your self, in your first Billing for Quarterly Customers) and WISE CENSURE, are found to mean and contemptible, I can't but think your spiteful Reflections on my Character and Writings, a great Panegyrick on both, for I shall prove, by my re-answering all the Questions you have yet publish'd, that *M. Smith* (the present Author of the *British Apollo*) is a dull, ignorant, false, and impertinent Scribler: So that had you spoke well either of me, or my Writings, it wou'd ha' lessen'd my Character with Men of Sense, whereas your spiteful Reflections have not only advanc'd it, but given a Value to a Thing of it self worthless; so that I even grow proud of your idle Abuses, and 'till you begin to praise me will no longer hold any mean Opinion of my self, as knowing all ingenious Persons will despise what the *British Apollo* speaks well of, and therefore pray Sir STUFF all your future Papers with nothing but Reflections on *Dunton's Oracle*, for the false Blurs that are cast upon a Member of *Athens* by vulgar Breath, deserves no Entertainment, but Scorn; and for that Reason the celebrated *Tatler* being ask'd why he did not exert himself, and crush at once those Scribes that revil'd him and his Writings, he gave his Well-wisher this Fable instead of a Reply.

'It happen'd one Day as a stout and honest Mastiff (that guarded the Village where he liv'd against Thieves and Robbers) was very gravely walking with one of his Puppies by his Side, all the little Dogs in the Street gather'd about him, and barking at him, the little Puppy was so offended at this Affront done to his Sire, that he ask'd him why he wou'd not fall upon them, and tear them to pieces? To which the Sire answer'd with a great Composure of Mind, *If there were no Curs, I should be no Mastiff.* And for the same Reason that Squire *Bickerstaff* takes no Notice of little barking Criticks, I would condemn the future Yelping of the *British Apollo*, (*Alexander*, at the *Olympick Games*, would wrestle with none but Monarchs) had I but the Thousandth Part of



of the Wit and Sense of that ingenious Gentleman who writes that bright and matchless Paper call'd *The Tatler*: But, *M. Smith*, tho' I am no Matiff, and (if the World will believe your *British Apollo*) han't one Grain of Sense, Ingenuity, or good Manners, yet, with all my Imperfections, I think it too mean a Condescension to take any farther Notice of your *British Apollo*, but just to own my mean Abilities did never deserve the Honour of your ill Word, and therefore I account it a most singular Favour, neither can I see my self so greatly applauded (for I account your Satyr a high Encomium) without some Temptation of Vain-glory: So that the Dirt you have flung at me has only dawb'd your self, as your Reflections on me is the greatest Panegyrick you cou'd bestow, and had your kind Recommendation of me, by way of Satyr, been publish'd with a Design to serve me, I wou'd have given you Thanks for it, but seeing (according to your wise Talent) you design'd it only as a Satyr, and not as a Panegyrick, I shall here, as a further Proof that your Satyr on *Dunton's Oracle* was a real Panegyrick, proclaim your Reflections as silly, false and impertinent, as those Answers you give to Questions, and full as unmannerly; for with what Face cou'd you attempt to satyze my Character, i. e. write a Panegyrick upon it, after you had offer'd in Two Letters to aid me in *Dunton's Oracle* if I'd drop the Weekly, and only publish a Monthly Oracle? But I durst not take you in for an Author after I had read your *British Apollos*, as finding by the meer Stuff that you there publish, that the Report of your being concern'd in *Dunton's Oracle* would lessen its Value with Men of Sense, and for the same Reason I desir'd you to say nothing of *Dunton's Athenianism*— (in which some of the Projects have been honour'd with Six Editions, which is a full Answer to all the Malice you can spit at it) as believing your good Character of that Book wou'd be the greatest Satyr you cou'd bestow upon it. Then how foolish and spiteful was *M. Smith* in telling the World, 'That the Heroick Poem, writ by the *Athenian Society*, and prefix'd to *Dunton's Athenianism*, was a Copy of wretched, hobling, dogrel Rhimes, when (had not *Dunton* been the Subject on't) I wou'd challenge you to shew me one Poem in all your *Apollos*, that can match that Heroick Poem with all its Imperfections, or that is so likely to be re-printed as *Dunton's Athenianism*, as appears by that Panegyrick bestow'd upon it by a Gentleman now living in *Exeter*, and inserted in my last Oracle; but had *Dunton's Athenianism*, or Six Hundred Projects, been that ridiculous Hodge-podge your Spight wou'd make it, yet 'twas matchless Impudence and Folly in *M. Smith* to give it an ill Character, for where's a Book of your writing that was ever once re-printed, or that the Printer and Stationer durst give Credit for without your first Billing and Hawking for Subscribers, as you do almost in every *Apollo* you publish? whereas the *Athenian Oracle* (of which *Dunton* writ the largest Share) never wanted Subscriptions tho' Three Times re-printed: But cou'd you find Ten Thousand Errors in my Character and Writings formerly publish'd, whilst your *British Apollo* is a dull, ignorant, false and impertinent Oracle, and *Dunton's* a true one, as I shall prove it to be by re-answering all your Questions, of what Service are all your sordid Reflections, but meerly to shew you a foolish, spiteful impudent Fellow? Then wou'd you revive the sinking Credit of your *British Apollo*, never think to do it by flinging of Dirt, when

meer Interest makes you do it, but by out-writing me: But the Reputation my *Athenian Oracle* has in the World making you doubt this, and being sensible of that Impossibility you labour under of defending your foolish Answers, or so much as your very Title, *British Apollo*, you have now made a very shameful and cowardly Retreat, by telling the World, 'I wou'd lessen your Character to take any farther Notice of *Dunton's Oracle*: Whereas your only Reasons are, because you can't, without exposing your own Folly and Ignorance, as I shall abundantly prove in my Sixth Oracle, where this Letter proving your Satyr on *Dunton's Oracle* a real Panegyrick upon it shall be continu'd, and then you may return to your hawking and praising your stinking Fish, your *British Apollo*, for when all my Letter is publish'd I shan't condescend to talk any further with you, for my Querists tell me I lessen the Credit of my *Athenian Mercury* by taking any Notice of you at all.

✍ In my next Oracle expect several very nice and curious Questions, and some of 'em of very great Importance.

### Dunton's Advertisement.

**R** EADER, I am here to inform thee, that in *Dunton's Oracle* (or Three Thousand Posts) for next Tuesday, will be inserted— The Secret-Post, or a Pacquet from *Athens*, containing all the Billets Deux, tender Letters, Love Cases, and merry Humours, that pass'd between Mr. *John Dunton* (a Member of the *Athenian Society*) and the most ingenious Ladies in the Queen's Dominions, the whole Pacquet being no Fiction, but Letters that really pass'd between Mr. *Dunton* and his Female Querists, and will be continu'd in *Dunton's Oracle*, when he has Room for it, 'till he has discover'd, under feign'd Names, all the Platonick and Love Cases that were sent to the *Athenian Mercury* for the Ten Years 'twas continu'd.— The Farewel-Post— The Mob-Post— The Whipping-Post— The Lying-Post— are already publish'd. Sold by *John Morphew*, near Stationer's Hall; by whom is also sold *Dunton's Athenianism*, or Six Hundred new Projects in Prose and Verse— *Dunton's Answer to Dr. Sacheverel's Sermon*, entitl'd The Bull-baiting— and his late Essay entitl'd— The Christian's Gazette, being a Pacquet for the pious Virtuosi on Subjects never started before.— Thus, my worthy and loving Friend, *Malamoris*, you see I take your Advice; for I hope in this Secret Post, and such as will follow it, to present the Ladies and Bachelors, (but more especially you my ingenious Friend) with such Platonick Secrets— Love Cases— and merry Fancies— as will innocently please such as can't be serious enough at present to love a dying Farewel to this Life and World.— I shall only add, you desire, *Malamoris*, to know how you and your Friends may have my Oracle every Tuesday and Saturday brought Home to you; speak to the Hawkers that cry the London Gazette, and they'll ne'er fail you, for they can't forget how many a fair Penny they formerly got by my *Athenian Mercury*.

\*\*\* The Amorous War, or a Duel with the Passions, a Poem, in a Letter to a Friend. By a Gentleman of the University of Oxford. To which is added, the Defeat, or the Lover vanquish'd, and again rallying with a Smile. Sold by *T. Darrack*, Printer, in Peterborough-Court in Little-Britain, Price 2d.

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